

SCHOOL: A PRACTICAL LEARNING LAB

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● RATIONALE

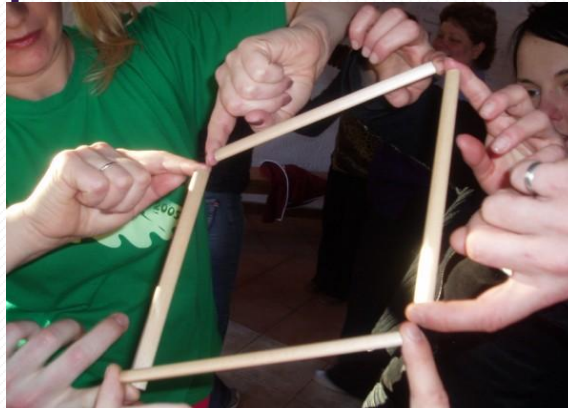
The aim of learning a language is to be able to communicate in target situations creatively. Learning a language not always means to master accurately every grammatical structure, but to explore already known knowledge and combine it with new information in different daily life activities: in English! Every situation may demand to change the way children organize and produce their language and even their reasoning process: like one does in a lab!

• DEFINITION

In the "School: A Practical Learning Lab" EFL philosophy, learning takes place in a lab (the class) where you experiment and practice. Even if you get it wrong, you can try it again. In a school conceived as a practical learning lab, students work with didactic materials and their personal contribution about how they see the world. They get the chance to observe, hypothesize, test and arrive at conclusions. These conclusions must be practical and an aid for building their own point of view about daily life experiences.

● PRINCIPLES

1. Learning can start when there is curiosity.
2. Learning takes place by doing.
3. Every human has a way of viewing the world and it should be respected.
4. The view of the world is dynamic and evidence may change it.
5. The learning process is constructed through personal experience



6. Everything that is learned in the class should be tested actively.
7. Communication is the main aim of learning a second language.
8. Second language can be acquired by trying new and different ways of using it.
9. Classes should have an environment of confidence and harmony.
10. Interaction among students and the teacher is important to develop communication skills.
11. The teacher is a facilitator who asks questions and through them, students go on constructing their own knowledge.

• THEORETICAL SUPPORT

Célestin Freinet
“Meticulous
observation for the
purpose of
communication”

John Dewey
Instrumentalism
(related to pragmatism).

Socratic Method

Mathew
Lipman
thinking
about
thinking

Ausubel
Constructivism

Erick Erikson's
Psychosocial
Dilemma

*The
Acquisition-
Learning
Hypothesis.*
Krashen

Psychosocial
development
Diane E.
Papalia

- **GENERAL OBJECTIVE OF A COURSE WITH THE
“SCHOOL: A PRACTICAL LEARNING LAB, EFL
PHILOSOPHY”**



- At the end of this course students will be able to maintain coherent and well structured conversations in English based on personal experiences. They will improve their listening, writing, reading and speaking skills dealing with daily life situations at pre-intermediate level of English for children (A2 Waystage or Elementary, according to Common European Framework).

SAMPLE ACTIVITY OF THE “SCHOOL: A PRACTICAL LEARNING LAB”

- 1.TOPIC: Body Health
- (Introducing verbs in present tense, regular and irregular)
- You will watch a segment of the movie *Kung Fu Panda*.
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-O_IQ_zwB8



Read this dialogue between Shifu and Po and watch the video for the first time.

While watching the video a second time, fill in the blanks with the missing verbs:

Shifu: This _____ the birth place of Kung Fu. Do you _____ to _____
Kung Fu

Po: Yeah

Shifu: Then I _____ your master. Don't _____

Po: Ok

Shifu: When you _____ on Fung Fu, when you _____, you _____.
But perhaps that _____ my fault I cannot _____ you the way I _____ have
trained _____ the five. I now _____ that the way I can _____ through you
is with this...

Po: Oh great cause I _____ hungry

Shifu: Good, when you have been trained you may _____. Let's _____.

- Speaking: In pairs discuss the answer to the following question:

What do you know about Kung Fu?

- Here is some information about Kung Fu.
- “Kung fu is one of a number of Chinese martial arts designed to refine the body and the mind. It is perhaps one of the most widely known Chinese martial arts, because many films incorporate kung fu techniques. There are hundreds of styles of kung fu taught all over the world, although they can be loosely divided into two camps: Shaolin style kung fu, and other techniques, some of which have a history which out dates the Shaolin order.”(S.E. Smith)
- Let’s look at some Kung Fu movements:
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qVd2WkCq_E



In pairs:

- Create a new sport.
- Explain what it consists on.
- State its rules.
- Present a model.

Include the information in your journal and highlight the verbs in present tense.